DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 095 261 CE 001 784

AUTHOR	Blumer, Alice Howard
TITLE	Jail Operations: Programmed Instruction, Book 4. Supervision.
INSTITUTION	Bureau of Prisons (Dept. of Justice), Washington, D.C.; Wisconsin Univ., Madison, Univ. Extension.
SPONS AGENCY	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (Dept. of Justice), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	73
NOTE	150p.; For related documents, see CE 001 781-3, CE 001 785 and CE 002 594
AVAILABLE FROM	Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (Stock Number 2705-0009, $1.60)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$6.60 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Materials; *Corrective Institutions; Course Content; Decision Making Skills; *Instructional Materials; Job Training; Occupational Information; *Officer Personnel; *Professional Training; Programed Materials
IDENTIFIERS	*Correctional Officers

ABSTRACT

The programed course was written to help jail officers assume the demands of jail work and emphasizes that, in addition to routine tasks, officers must be fully prepared to serve an important function for society as well-trained, responsible professionals. Much of the officer's job will depend on his ability to make decisions and to avoid the mistakes and disproven beliefs of the past. The course material includes discussions of mistakes which other men and women have made on the job; this anecdotal background material was supplied by Federal Jail Inspectors. The fourth book of the course is designed to teach the jail officer ways in which he can most effectively manage and control the activities and actions of prisoners in the jail. The book provides a means by which he can consciously develop his supervisory skills and improve his effectiveness as an officer. (Author/AJ)

ED 095261

Jail Operations

A Training Course for Jail Officers

Programmed Instruction:

Book 4: Supervision

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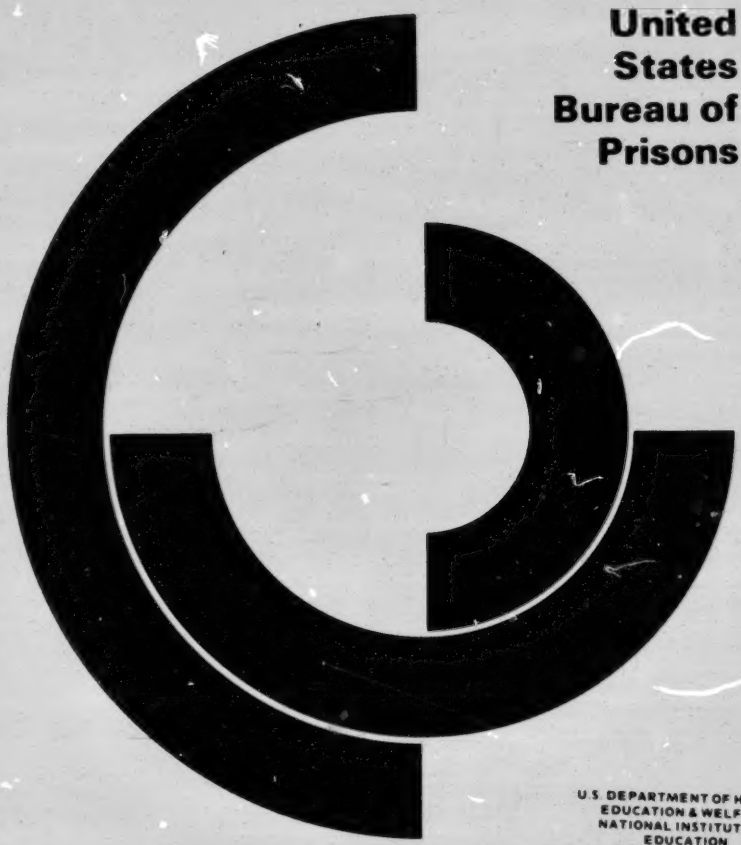

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CE001784

Jail Operations

A Programmed Instruction Course based on the text, The Jail: Its Operation and Management

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402 Price $1.60
Stock Number 2705 00009

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Specialist
University
Extension
The University
of Wisconsin

Published by the
**United States
Bureau of
Prisons**

in cooperation
with
University
Extension
**The University
of Wisconsin**

funded by
Grant No. 373
**Law Enforcement
Assistance Administration**

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Preface

This course is for jail officers. It was written to help them assume the difficult and challenging demands of jail work. The course emphasizes that, in addition to the routine tasks which officers must learn to perform in the jail, they must also be fully prepared to serve an important function for society as well-trained, responsible professionals. Much of the jail officer's job will depend on his ability to make important decisions and to avoid the mistakes and disproven beliefs of the past. The course material includes discussions of mistakes which other men and women have made on the job; it is hoped that jail officers can learn from these things and avoid making the same errors. Naturally, there can be no substitute for actual on-the-job experience. But it is hoped that by participating in this course, jail officers will be better prepared to perform in a professional, competent manner on the job than if they were required to learn only "by doing".

Alice H. Blumer
Madison, Wisconsin

Acknowledgement

Much of the anecdotal background material found in these pages was supplied by the Federal Jail Inspectors who willingly devoted their time recalling pertinent experiences for the author. The author is indebted to these men; their material has done much to enliven these pages.

The Jail Inspectors also contributed time and effort to the field testing of the material. They are: John L. Anderson, Charles R. Burns, Frank D. Chastain, Merlyn D. Coons, John W. Cossett, Hugh R. Crum, Francis J. Kirkland, John W. McGinnis, Max L. Mustain, Oscar L. Olive, and Hubert H. Raney.

Throughout the development stages of this course, the men of the Dane County Jail, Madison, Wisconsin, have consistently cooperated with and assisted the author, not only by supplying necessary details, but also by carefully reading and responding to the material. The author wishes to thank Sheriff Vernon C. Leslie for allowing free access to the jail. Special thanks go to Captain Otis R. Lund who devoted much time to interviews and supplied needed information to the author. In addition, the following men spent many hours with the author reading and responding to material, and answering endless questions.

Deputy William C. Ludwig
Deputy Edward C. Pohlman

During the evaluation period, eleven jails offered time and manpower to participating in the sometimes long and involved steps necessary for course evaluation. The author wishes to thank the jail administrators and the men and women involved from the following jails.

Ada County Jail, Boise, Idaho
Bexar County Jail, San Antonio, Texas
Chesapeake City Jail, Chesapeake, Virginia
Franklin County Jail, Columbus, Ohio
Hamilton County Jail, Chattanooga, Tennessee
Imperial County Jail, El Centro, California
McCracken County Jail, Paducah, Kentucky
Tulsa County Jail, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Warren County Jail, Bowling Green, Kentucky
Wyandotte County Jail, Kansas City, Kansas
York County Jail, York, Pennsylvania

Note to the Reader

This course has been written in a form known as Programmed Instruction. It is *not a test*. Programmed Instruction enables you to work alone, without a teacher, and at your own pace. To participate in this type of course, all you have to do is read carefully, follow instructions and complete each book. You cannot use this course like a magazine; that is, opening at the middle and flipping through the pages. It is very important that you *begin at the beginning* and read all the material. You will see that, throughout the course, when you read some material, you will be asked to respond to some written questions and then check your answer by comparing it to the printed answer appearing on the following page. This is not, in any way, a test. It is simply a way of helping you to learn and remember the material. You will not be timed while taking this course, so you may go at your own pace, taking a break whenever you feel tired. We think you will enjoy learning in this manner, and hope that you will finish the course with a renewed feeling of pride in your profession and in your ability to perform your job with skill and confidence.

BOOK FOUR: SUPERVISION

INTRODUCTION

The safety and safekeeping of prisoners is a primary responsibility of the jail and its personnel. Unless the jail staff has control of the jail, this responsibility cannot be met. This chapter was designed to teach you ways in which you can most effectively manage and control the activities and actions of prisoners in the jail. You do not need to be a "born supervisor", this chapter will provide a means by which you can consciously develop your supervisory skills and improve your effectiveness as a jail officer.

I. GENERAL SUPERVISORY TECHNIQUES

Supervision in the jail is aimed at accomplishing two things:

- getting people to do what is required of them
- developing an orderly, controlled environment

Poor supervision in a jail may well result in:

- disciplinary problems
- conflict between staff and prisoners
- poor prisoner morale
- escapes

Maintaining good supervision in the jail depends on the ability of the jail staff to plan, initiate and evaluate *all* of the activities in the jail. This is particularly true when actual tasks are involved, such as cell clean-up, work details, laundry pick-up, etc.

> Recently, prisoners in a county jail complained loudly about the excessive cold in the jail at night. Many of the prisoners were reporting regularly for sick call, experiencing colds and sinus trouble. An investigation of the problem revealed that:
>
> 1) The inmates assigned to the boiler room had received no instructions about when the heating system should be in operation and, in fact, had received no training in the operation of that particular system.
> 2) No jailer had been assinged the job of checking to see that the inmates were doing their job at all.

How do you think a situation like this could have been avoided?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

First of all, a jailer should have been assigned the responsibility of supervising the boiler room operation.

Once the jailer was assigned to the task, he should have

- made sure that the prisoners assigned to the job received adequate training in operation of the heating equipment
- given instructions to prisoners assigned to the job indicating when the heat should be on and when it should be turned down or off
- made sure that frequent checks were made of the boiler room to determine if the job was being done according to instructions

The example points out that the job of operating the heating equipment was done improperly because: (choose one)

___ a) the prisoners were lazy
___ b) the prisoners forgot to leave the heat on during the night
___ c) the jail personnel failed to use good supervisory techniques in directing the work activity
___ d) the prisoners failed to ask for instructions and training in their assignment

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) the prisoners were lazy
___ b) the prisoners forgot to leave the heat on during the night
_X_ c) the jail personnel failed to use good supervisory techniques in directing the work activity
___ d) the prisoners failed to ask for instructions and training in their assignment

Prisoners cannot be blamed for poor job performance if they have not received adequate instructions and are not periodically checked by a supervisor. A supervisor who automatically blames prisoners for being lazy or irresponsible is simply making excuses for his own behavior.

A good supervisor should always know what he wants done and what the final result of the job should be. And when he has his goal in mind, he should be able to explain his goals to the prisoners who are chosen for the work.

Officer Thomas walked into a six-man cell area and announced to the prisoners that he wanted the area "cleaned up in a half an hour".

When he returned in half an hour, the men had straightened up the magazines and personal articles in the cells and were now playing cards. Officer Thomas asked the men, "Why haven't you mopped the floors in each cell, dusted the bars, and thrown away the old magazines?"

Officer Thomas was angry; he felt the men had ignored his instructions to clean up the area.

The men, however, felt they had done what was asked of them.

Who was really at fault?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

Officer Thomas was at fault in this case. The men did not know what Officer Thomas meant by "cleaning up" the area. If he had taken the time to specify the goals of the job to the men, he undoubtedly would have been more satisfied with the result. Specifying the goals of the job means telling the workers exactly *what you want them to do*. If you want them to wash the windows, say so. Don't simply say "clean this place up".

What were the goals of the cleanup job which Officer Thomas should have properly explained?

___ a) making beds
___ b) burning trash
___ c) mopping the floors of each cell
___ d) painting the walls
___ e) dusting the cell bars
___ f) washing the windows
___ g) throwing away all old magazines
___ h) making the cells smell good

Turn page for answer . . .

Answers:

___ a) making beds
___ b) burning trash
X c) mopping the floors of each cell
___ d) painting the walls
X e) dusting the cell bars
___ f) washing the windows
X g) throwing away all old magazines
___ h) making the cells smell good

c), e) and g) are the goals of the cleanup job which Officer Thomas assigned. Think of all the time he would have saved and all the ill feelings he would have avoided if he had properly told the men these goals the first time.

Although Officer Thomas himself knew what the goals of the cleanup job were, he obviously failed to explain them to the prisoners who had to perform the task. Thomas' job as supervisor does *not* end when he has determined the goals of each task he assigns. He must also:

- give clear and understandable orders
- teach prisoners how to do the job, if necessary
- make frequent checks and correct anyone who is doing the job incorrectly
- evaluate the performance of each prisoner assigned to the work

All too often, officers assume that prisoners understand orders or regulations when, in fact, they do not.

> In one jail, a new prisoner was told that the jail rules required him to make his bed "in the military manner". Not knowing what this meant, and being too afraid to ask, the prisoner made his bed in the best way he knew how. His supervising officer inspected the cell and, seeing the bed, ordered the prisoner to remake the bed, saying, "I thought you were going to make this *in the military manner*!"

This treatment of the prisoner was obviously unfair. There is *no reason* to assume that every prisoner knows what is meant by this type of regulation.

An effective supervisor when dealing with the new prisoner would probably have: (choose correct answer)

___ a) told another prisoner to see that the new man made his bed according to jail regulations
___ b) allowed the prisoner to make the bed any way he knew how
___ c) asked the prisoner if he knew how to make his bed "in the military manner", since the prisoner did not know, the supervisor should have given instructions and watched while the man performed the task

Answer:

___ a) told another prisoner to see that the new man made his bed according to jail regulations

___ b) allowed the prisoner to make the bed any way he knew how

X c) asked the prisoner if he knew how to make his bed "in the military manner"; since the prisoner did not know, the supervisor should have given instructions and watched while the man performed the task

If you chose this answer, you obviously realize the importance of patiently giving careful, detailed instructions to those who are unfamiliar with jail routine and regulations.

A good supervisor makes it a policy to check frequently to see that a job is being done properly. No one likes to complete a job only to be told when he is finished that he did the job incorrectly. Imagine how you would feel if you stacked 500 heavy cartons in a storeroom and were later told to do it again because you stacked them in the wrong corner! No doubt, you would be angry and frustrated. Wouldn't you be happier if, after stacking only 10 cartons, a supervisor stopped in and said, "I'm glad I checked before you went to the trouble of stacking all those cartons. They should be stacked in that opposite corner, not here"?

In order to supervise effectively, you must always remember that all men are individuals with differing abilities and differing personalities and moods. A good supervisor always takes into account these differences and avoids making rigid standards for men to follow. Although it takes more patience and understanding, a supervisor who considers and adapts to individual differences is always more effective than a rigid, inflexible supervisor.

In the left-hand column are some descriptions of prisoners assigned to various work details in a jail. See if you can choose the supervisory policy which would be most effective for each individual described. (In the blank provided, write in the number of the person who would gain most from the supervisory technique described)

1. Edgar Gaines is young, temperamental and often a trouble-maker in the jail. He frequently plays when he should be working and tries to get other prisoners to join him instead of working.

2. Edward Hardy is an older prisoner who has a hearing problem and, although he tries to listen carefully, often does not fully understand directions given by his supervisor.

3. James Best has worked as a TV repairman for most of his adult life. He works well independently and learns quickly while on the job.

4. Robert Kondon has always been co-operative and eager to do good work in the jail. In the last week he has been moody and hard to supervise.

5. Albert Traynor is young and frightened by being in jail for the first time. Although he is anxious to do his work efficiently, he often makes mistakes and is last to finish.

___ a) Needs little supervision and should be allowed to do his work without frequent supervisory checks.

___ b) Needs encouragement and help while on the job. Supervisor should point out mistakes early before they are compounded, and should try to build prisoner's confidence by encouragement and praise when some aspect of job is done correctly.

___ c) Needs special attention by supervisor giving directions. When other men have received instructions and have begun job, supervisor should repeat them for this man or allow him to ask questions about the job.

___ d) Needs firm, close control. Should not be left unsupervised for long and should receive proper disciplinary action for repeated infractions.

___ e) Special attention should be given to this man. An interested, sympathetic supervisor might try to find if trouble at home or worry about an upcoming trial have caused a temporary change in behavior and attitude.

Turn page to check your answers.

Answer:

3 a), 5 b), 2 c), 1 d), 4 e).

If you gave the correct answers, you have shown your ability to adapt supervisory policy to the needs of the individual person. If you are able to do this on the job, you are undoubtedly well on your way to becoming an effective supervisor. All too often, it is easy for jail officers to fall back into their old habits and forget to use these techniques. It requires *constant thought and practice* to apply the right techniques consistently.

Prisoner Bob Lyons was unloading a delivery truck at the jail. His supervising officer noticed that, although Lyons was working hard and doing an efficient job, he was unloading the heavy cases onto a flimsy laundry cart.

Which of the following statements do you think the officer should make in order to correct the situation: (choose one)

___ a) "Listen, Lyons, if you had paid attention when I gave the orders, you'd know that I wanted you to use the four-wheeled truck for those cases, not the laundry cart. Now hurry up and get it."

___ b) "The next time you make a mistake like this, I'll see that you are fined for destroying jail equipment."

___ c) "You are doing a good job, but for the rest of the unloading, use the four-wheeled truck. The laundry truck is just too light for this load."

___ d) "Good work, Lyons, keep at it."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

c) is the correct answer. If you chose this answer, you undoubtedly realize the importance of combining praise with criticism. Lyons was doing his job well; there was no reason to ignore that fact simply because he was making one mistake.

Either of the first two answers would be unnecessarily harsh and critical. Lyons could not be blamed if he became angry or lost his enthusiasm for the work as a result of these remarks.

If you chose d) as your answer, you obviously realize that praise can have a good effect on prisoner performance. However, a good supervisor *should* correct a person if he is doing something wrong. If praise is too easily earned, it often becomes meaningless.

A prisoner's overall behavior while confined is an extremely important factor in making many important decisions. Information provided about prisoners by jail officers strongly influences:

- work assignments
- security classification decisions in the jail
- security classification decisions in workhouses and prisons

It is the duty of each jail officer who supervises a prisoner to make an honest and accurate evaluation of the prisoner's behavior while he has been in contact with him. Because these evaluations are so important, each jail officer must make sure that he learns the best techniques of evaluation and consistently employs them.

Suppose that you had supervised a prisoner for only an hour or so one day during a work detail and were subsequently asked to evaluate his overall behavior for a parole officer. Do you think that your contact with the man has been sufficient for you to come to any conclusions about his behavior?

Which of the following statements could you make that would be the fairest to the prisoner and the most helpful to the parole officer? (choose one)

___ a) "I think he is a troublemaker. He's too quiet on the job and seems to be sneaky. I don't trust him."

___ b) "This man is a consistently hard worker. He has never needed disciplinary measures while on the job and always does his work well."

___ c) "The prisoner has worked under my supervision only once—for an hour or two. During this very short time, he did as he was told and presented no disciplinary problem."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) "I think he is a troublemaker. He's too quiet on the job and seems to be sneaky. I don't trust him."

___ b) "This man is a consistently hard worker. He has never needed disciplinary measures while on the job and always does his work well."

X c) "The prisoner has worked under my supervision only once—for an hour or two. During this very short time, he did as he was told and presented no disciplinary problem."

c) is obviously the best answer since it clearly indicates that the officer has not had much contact with the prisoner. Although the officer fairly reports the prisoner's good behavior for a short time, it clearly points out his inability to make any generalizations about the man's overall behavior.

We have already discussed the importance of making allowances for individual differences while supervising prisoners. This is also an important factor in making a written evaluation of a prisoner.

Which of the following evaluations by officers indicate their understanding of and willingness to adjust to individual differences among prisoners? (*choose one or more*)

___ a) "Because of a hearing impairment, the prisoner has difficulty understanding my directions. However, his eagerness to ask me questions and learn on the job shows that he is a cooperative and willing worker."

___ b) "This man never pays attention and seems moody and depressed while working. He is obviously insolent and maladjusted."

___ c) "This prisoner often stops working to sit down and rest. Although he gives the impression of being lazy and unwilling to work, I believe that he is physically weak and unable to perform a normal work load. When I give him light chores to perform, he does them well and seems grateful for the consideration."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

X a) "Because of a hearing impairment, the prisoner has difficulty understanding my directions. However, his eagerness to ask me questions and learn on the job shows that he is a cooperative and willing worker."

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When making an all-important prisoner evaluation, a supervising officer must be sure that he recognizes *change* in a prisoner and records it. Often a new prisoner is insolent and uncooperative. But in many instances, after a period of time, this prisoner may well begin to adapt to his confinement and become more manageable and cooperative. Recognize this kind of change and discuss it when you are asked to evaluate a prisoner's behavior.

Has this supervisor recognized change and correctly included it in his evaluation?

> "The prisoner was abusive, foul-mouthed, and lazy when he arrived. I have been forced to take disciplinary measures against him often. However, I have noticed this month that he has had no arguments with other prisoners and is participating in the work detail without the usual complaints."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

The jail officer who wrote this report has described a change which he has observed in the prisoner's usual behavior. Although he correctly refrains from predicting that the prisoner is a "changed man," he does indicate that some improvement has occurred in his recent behavior.

Remember, when you are making prisoner evaluations, that some words can give the wrong impression of a man. It would be unfair to merely describe a prisoner as "dumb." Point out the things that lead you to this conclusion instead. Does he have trouble understanding instructions, does he repeat mistakes you have already tried to correct?

Do not simply describe a man as "insolent." Think of what you mean by this. Does it mean that he is quiet and moody when you supervise him, or does it mean that he talks back to you and defies your orders?

DON'T FORGET THAT THE PERSON READING YOUR REPORT NEEDS *DETAILS*, NOT A STRING OF LABELS.

In order to supervise effectively, a jail officer should: (*choose correct answers*)

___ a) give orders firmly and only once
___ b) decide the goals of the job to be done and explain them to the prisoners
___ c) treat all prisoners alike
___ d) assign a job and not check on the work until it is finished
___ e) give clear, understandable orders and repeat them when necessary
___ f) constantly praise prisoners for their work
___ g) recognize and respond to the individual differences of prisoners
___ h) combine criticism with justified praise when supervising prisoners on the job

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answers:

___ a) give orders firmly and only once
X b) decide the goals of the job to be done and explain them to the prisoners
___ c) treat all prisoners alike
___ d) assign a job and not check on the work until it is finished
X e) give clear, understandable orders and repeat them when necessary
___ f) constantly praise prisoners for their work
X g) recognize and respond to the individual differences of prisoners
X h) combine criticism with justified praise when supervising prisoners on the job

Which of the following do you consider to be a good evaluation of prisoner behavior?

___ a) "I have worked with this man for three weeks. He seems nervous and easily upset. Sudden noises seem to startle him. And he has had three fights with other prisoners who have tried to tease him. He frequently asks me what kind of sentence I think he will get. My guess is that his worry over the upcoming trial and sentence are the cause of his bad behavior."

___ b) "Although I have worked with this man only a few times, I think I know his type. He is not dependable and seems to be a born troublemaker. Yesterday he got into a fight and another prisoner told me that he gets into fights all the time in the cell area."

___ c) "This prisoner is mean and insolent. He never finishes his work on time. I can tell the other prisoners don't like him either. Often he never talks to anyone for a week."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

X a) "I have worked with this man for three weeks. He seems nervous and easily upset. Sudden noises seem to startle him. And he has had three fights with other prisoners who have tried to tease him. He frequently asks me what kind of sentence I think he will get. My guess is that his worry over the upcoming trial and sentence are the cause of his bad behavior."

___ b) "Although I have worked with this man only a few times, I think I know his type. He is not dependable and seems to be a born troublemaker. Yesterday he got into a fight and another prisoner told me that he gets into fights all the time in the cell area."

___ c) "This prisoner is mean and insolent. He never finishes his work on time. I can tell the other prisoners don't like him either. Often he never talks to anyone for a week."

a) is correct. This officer has been very careful in his evaluation not to come to any hasty conclusions. He treats the man as an individual and recognizes that his problems could well be a result of his worry about his upcoming trial. Also, the officer avoids describing the man merely with adjectives. He gives examples of things the prisoner has done which lead the officer to believe he is "nervous and tense."

A supervisor can only maintain his effectiveness when he is able to preserve his image of authority. This means that he must in no way allow prisoners to take advantage of him or become too familiar with him. Although, invariably, prisoners may try to undercut an officer's authority, they will easily become discouraged when that officer demonstrates a professional and consistent approach to his supervisory duties.

Any officer who supervises prisoners should keep in mind these general rules when in contact with prisoners:

- AVOID FAMILIARITY WITH PRISONERS
- DO NOT GOSSIP WITH PRISONERS
- DO NOT GIVE ADVICE TO PRISONERS
- DO NOT SHOW FAVORITISM
- NEVER MAKE A PROMISE WHICH YOU CANNOT KEEP

A friendly, concerned jail officer is always an asset to the jail in which he works. *However*, a jail officer who becomes overly friendly with prisoners is liable to lose the respect of the prisoners as well as his ability to control them.

Whenever a jail officer discusses his private life with a prisoner, he gives that prisoner a chance to begin treating him as an equal instead of one who is in authority. All too often, jail officers discuss their own marital problems, financial difficulties, or drinking experiences with prisoners in an attempt to be friendly. Naturally, such detailed discussions of a jail officer's personal shortcomings can make him an object of ridicule to prisoners.

Can you think of any instances in which a jailer might have allowed a prisoner to become unnecessarily friendly with him?

No doubt you can think of several. The following example shows just one incident that occurred when an officer became overly friendly towards a prisoner.

> Officer John Clay was unhappy because his wife had threatened to divorce him. One day a prisoner talked to Clay about his problem and Clay began to tell about his own problems at home. The prisoner repeated their conversation to the other prisoners and when Clay attempted to discipline them for making too much noise, they disregarded him, laughing and calling him "Dear John". Clearly, they now thought of him as an equal.

Naturally this rule should be extended to exchanging of confidences with prisoners concerning staff problems in the jail. Under no circumstances should staff problems be discussed with prisoners—they are eager to find fault. DON'T GIVE THEM EASY OPPORTUNITIES.

Whenever a jail officer engages in idle gossip with prisoners, he allows himself to become an object of contempt and distrust. Comments to prisoners about other staff members or prisoners quickly become common information in a jail. And the jail officer who has made the comments will invariably find himself in the unpleasant position of trying to reconstruct his shattered reputation as a professional, effective supervisor.

Try to resist the temptation of giving informal advice to prisoners. Giving advice can, in a jail situation, be very risky. Prisoners are quick to blame an officer for giving them bad advice and causing them trouble. Most jail officers are *not* professional marriage counselors, lawyers, employment consultants, or psychiatrists. An officer who is a patient, sympathetic listener can do much to reassure a worried prisoner. But an officer who freely dispenses informal advice takes on a responsibility for which he is generally unprepared. Naturally, if a prisoner asks for your advice, it is always a good idea for you to suggest that he consult his lawyer, his clergyman, or another qualified person.

One jail officer was friendly and generous to two prisoners who were "regulars" but often showed indifference towards the new prisoners in the jail. Noticing this, a group of new prisoners began to complain to the sheriff that others were being shown preferential treatment while *they* were being ignored. Angry at this unfair treatment, the prisoners refused to obey orders and became a discipline problem in the jail.

This is an example of what can happen when a jail officer carelessly ignores an important supervisory rule for dealing with prisoners. Can you state the rule that was ignored?
(write the rule here:)

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

DO NOT SHOW FAVORITISM.

Below are five situations in which jail officers have forgotten to follow the five rules we have just discussed. Next to each situation write the number of the rule that the officer has ignored or forgotten.

1. AVOID FAMILIARITY WITH PRISONERS
2. DO NOT GOSSIP WITH PRISONERS
3. DO NOT GIVE ADVICE TO PRISONERS
4. DO NOT SHOW FAVORITISM
5. NEVER MAKE A PROMISE WHICH YOU CANNOT KEEP

a) ___ Recently, Officer Thompson told some of the prisoners that the sheriff was about to lose his job because he had a drinking problem and couldn't hide it anymore.

b) ___ Recently, a prisoner was depressed and quiet because his wife had not visited him in several weeks. Officer Bill Storm recently cheered up the prisoner by saying: "I'll call your wife and get her to come this week, no matter what."

c) ___ Officer Ray Jones likes to play chess. He frequently plays with Earl Green, a prisoner. They often tease each other about foolish chess moves. Also, while they are playing, Jones amuses Green with stories about his "troublesome teenagers" at home who talk on the phone too much and wear funny clothes to school.

d) ___ One of the prisoners in the jail where Officer Grey works is the brother of one of Grey's best friends. Grey often brings home-cooked food to the prisoner and arranges for his friend to visit his brother late in the evening instead of during the visiting hours.

e) ___ One of the prisoners in the jail where Officer Harold Champe works was charged with wife-beating soon after he had served a term for the same offense. The second time the man was brought to the jail, Champe had a long talk with him and suggested: "You should divorce your wife, she causes you nothing but trouble."

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

a) 2
b) 5
c) 1
d) 4
e) 3

II. SUPERVISORY SITUATIONS

To this point, we have discussed *general* supervisory principles and have applied them to jail situations.

In this section, you will see that the custodial nature of the jail demands that a more rigid form of *personal supervision* must be applied in the jail than in almost any other situation where supervision is necessary. In free society, no one would reprimand a man for talking and arguing loudly or for leaving a lot of wasted food on his plate in a public restaurant. But in the jail, such seemingly harmless lapses in behavior must be closely supervised. If you, the jail officer, are not capable of effective supervision of these every day occurrences, the jail can easily become a chaotic and dangerous place.

Only the jail staff is qualified to supervise the activities of prisoners. When prisoners are permitted to supervise the activities of other prisoners, it is a sure sign that jail personnel have given away control of the jail. This situation is potentially very dangerous both for prisoners and for jail officers.

> Recently, four prisoners of a county jail were charged by a grand jury for forcibly taking money from other prisoners, torturing them and forcing them to take part in unnatural sex acts.
>
> The ring leader of the group protested that it was a "sanitary court" used to keep cells clean and that it was approved by jail officials.

The above case is a classic example of a "kangaroo court". Such courts use various titles such as "banking" and "orientation", but they indicate one thing: the irresponsibility and incompetence of the jail staff that allows them to exist. The jail staff is totally responsible for the care and safety of the prisoners.

Existence of a prisoner-run "court" is a denial of the rights of the majority of prisoners. The jail staff can be held legally liable for permitting such a court to exist.

In one large county jail, an inmate designated as a "trusty" was given the job of photographing new prisoners. He was not supervised on the job and was given complete authority over the prisoners he was photographing.

It was later found that the trusty was a member of a jail kangaroo court, and was regularly ordering prisoners to report to him for "retakes" of their photographs. He was using his assignment and his illegal court membership to force them into unnatural sexual relationships. The prisoners, feeling that he had the backing of the jail staff, were afraid to make formal complaints against him.

In this case, allowing a trusty to exercise authority over other prisoners indicated a serious lapse in supervision and led to:

- loss of control of the jail by jail personnel
- violation on the part of the jail staff of the legal rights of the other prisoners

Officer Rickert works in a large city jail where there is an overload of paper work to be done. Recently, he assigned a trusty, Hal Abrams, to work as a typist-clerk in the jail office. Abrams was asked to type out the cell assignments every day. Abrams learned the job quickly and Officer Rickert decided that Abrams could be left on his own to the assignments without supervision.

Can you think of what the likely consequences Officer Rickert's permissiveness towards Abrams were?

Turn page when you have thought of a possible answer . . .

Answer:

Abrams, the trusty, soon learned that he could make cell assignments to please his friends and any other prisoners with an attractive bribe to offer him. He arranged to put homosexuals together and in some cases, placed younger, weaker prisoners in cells with aggressive homosexuals. In one instance, he arranged to put two known troublemakers together and within a few days, they had organized and were running a powerful "banking" committee and were taking advantage of the other prisoners.

Write a short statement which shows the consequences of allowing prisoners to supervise other prisoners in the jail.

Turn page when finished . . .

Answer:

Two things usually happen when prisoners are allowed to supervise other prisoners.

1. Jail personnel lose control in the jail
2. The rights of other prisoners to protection of their safety and well-being while in jail are violated

- although your wording is different, your answer should include these two main points.

We have just discussed the dangers of allowing prisoners to take over supervisory functions in the jail. It is an equally poor practice for jail personnel to allow mechanical and electronic devices to take over supervisory duties that should be performed on a person-to-person basis.

In a large midwestern jail there is a control center with seven TV monitors that must be constantly watched by a jail officer. Some of the monitors are focused on security entrances. The officer must identify persons appearing at these entrances and operate electrical controls to let them enter. Other monitors are placed in cell halls, and still others are placed in maximum custody cells. This same officer is also responsible for listening to three 2-way radio bands, answering several telephones, and operating dictating equipment for other officers.

This jail is so confident of the effectiveness of surveillance with TV monitors that fewer guards are used in patrolling and checking these areas for trouble.

It is understandable that the jail personnel appreciate the effectiveness of TV monitoring equipment. However, their strong reliance on the equipment has caused them to forget the extreme importance of their personal supervision.

Can you see any reasons why this practice of relying on the TV monitors for supervision might lead to a dangerous situation in this jail?

Turn page when you have thought of an answer . . .

Answer:

In the first place, the jail officer on duty is probably just too busy to keep his total attention on the monitors and may overlook some movements and incidents.

In an earlier chapter, we discussed the shortcomings of electronic surveillance equipment. Such things as picture quality and limited camera range make thorough supervision by machine impossible.

There is no substitute for on-the-scene supervision! Only a jail officer in person can check for such hidden dangers as bar and lock tampering. Only a jail officer *in person* can talk to prisoners and, by careful watching and listening, sense the overall mood and atmosphere of a cell hall.

A jail officer's most important duties are performed *in the cell area*, not at a desk. A jail where all officers are sitting at their desks or gathered in the receiving area is a poorly run, potentially dangerous jail.

It would be a mistake to state that personal surveillance of cell areas is fool-proof. Illegal activity can and will be present in many jails in spite of even the most thorough methods of personal and mechanical surveillance. However, jail officers must work hard to make these supervisory techniques as effective and efficient as possible.

Making on-the-scene supervision of cell blocks as effective as possible requires flexibility and even imagination on the part of the patrolling officer. Naturally, prisoners may quickly become aware of any set routine practiced by a patrolling officer. For this reason, jail officers should consciously make frequent patrols at irregular times that cannot be predicted by knowing inmates. And while on patrol, the officer should be constantly aware of unusual sounds or activities. Sometimes excessive quiet or unusually loud noise in the cell areas can be immediate danger signs to an alert jailer. The imaginative, alert officer is "tuned in" to *all* such unusual signs.

Recently a large number of jail inmates planned and executed a successful escape from an old jail. Several of the inmates kicked their way through the dilapidated building while another group stayed in the cell area drowning out the noise by singing Christmas carols loudly and creating a general disturbance.

Naturally, the poor condition of the jail was a primary reason for the escape. However, can you cite a point at which imaginative supervision by jail officers might have prevented this mass escape?

Turn page when you have thought of an answer . . .

Answer:
An alert jailer probably would have been suspicious of the loud singing and noise in the cell block. A surprise investigation of the situation by jail personnel might well have uncovered the plan and prevented the mass escape.

In many old jails, supervision is made extremely difficult because of poor architecture. Often it is impossible for a jail officer to check on a cell unit without having the turn of his key in the lock or the sound of his footsteps warn the prisoners of his approach. Many suggestions have been made for improving this situation in specific jails. However, you can see that even the most ingenious ideas have faults:

> In one jail, an elaborate system of one-way observation windows was installed as a means of improving the jailer's ability to surprise his prisoners with irregular patrols. It was soon found, however, that when the lights in the cell block were turned down or off, the windows worked in the opposite way: the prisoners could see the jailer approaching, but the jailer couldn't see the prisoners!

> In one county, a grand jury ordered that jailers be equipped with rubber-soled shoes so that they could detect illegal activity in the jail by "sneaking up" on prisoners. It was soon found that the rubber-soled shoes were even noisier than regular shoes because they squeaked loudly when in contact with the clean jail floors!

It might be said that, although good personal supervision in a jail is often made extremely difficult by poor architecture or a shortage of on-duty jailers, a good jailer can make the most of the situation by: (*choose one or more*)

___ a) making regularly scheduled patrols
___ b) using his imagination and being constantly alert for possible signs of disturbance
___ c) threatening the prisoners
___ d) wearing sneakers on patrol
___ e) making frequent irregular patrols

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) making regularly scheduled patrols
_X_ b) using his imagination and being constantly alert for possible signs of disturbance
___ c) threatening the prisoners
___ d) wearing sneakers on patrol
_X_ e) making frequent irregular patrols

Supervision of a housing unit involves a number of surveillance activities. It also is extremely important that the jail staff sets standards for cleanliness and makes sure, by frequent inspection and prisoner guidance, that these standards are met.

Low standards of cleanliness in a jail point to staff indifference and neglect. Sometimes unclean, messy conditions can be dangerous as well as unsanitary; they encourage a breakdown in security and poor morale among prisoners who must live under these conditions.

It is a fact that maintenance of a high standard of cleanliness in the jail does much to raise prisoner morale and to create useful work activity for prisoners.

> In one jail, prisoners used smuggled hacksaw blades to saw through the bars in preparation for an escape. During the day they used a paste made of soap, cigarette ashes and paper to hide the cuts in the bars. The light in the cell areas was poor because of filthy windows and lighting fixtures and the sawed-through bars went unnoticed by the officers. Also, during their routine, careless inspections, they did not notice the hacksaw blades that had been hidden in the cell door channels.

Do you think prisoners would have made this type of escape attempt in a jail with high standards of cleanliness and cell inspection?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

It is unlikely that this type of attempt would have been made. Prisoners frequently try to take advantage of careless situations. If a jail staff is sloppy and careless about standards, and fails to inspect regularly, it is reasonable to assume that observant prisoners will try to benefit from the situation.

Prisoners, like everyone else, take pride in their surroundings. But if supervisors are careless and disinterested, prisoners will lose interest too and will let their surroundings deteriorate. Frequent inspections, high standards of cleanliness, and a genuinely interested attitude on the part of jail personnel will do much to encourage high standards among the prisoners.

In the majority of jails in this country, printed regulations are vaguely worded and too generalized to be effective in upholding high standards of cleanliness and discipline. Here is an example of the type of regulation concerning sanitary conditions that is often found posted in a jail:

> Prisoners may and will be used in jail maintenance work. All toilets, sinks, wash basins, bathrooms, floors, halls, stairway walls, doors, ceilings, cell bars and partitions must be kept clean at all times. No litter must be allowed to accumulate in any part of the jail. Bedding must be kept clean and aired regularly. Each prisoner will be held responsible for the cleanliness and sanitation of his or her cell.

There are a number of vague or generalized guidelines in this regulation. For instance, 'clean', 'litter', and 'regularly' are words which everyone understands. But does everyone understand them in the same way? Let's examine the regulations in sections . . .

1. All toilets, sinks, wash basins, bathrooms, floors, halls, stairway walls, doors, ceilings, cell bars and partitions must be kept clean at all times.

This statement indicates the *general* standard of the jail; i.e., that the jail should be clean. But it is not specific about important details.

- Does "cleaning a floor" mean mopping with detergent and water, or does it mean scrubbing it with a brush and waxing it?
  (One southern sheriff feels that a floor is not 'clean' until the tiles have been scrubbed with a strong solution of muriatic acid)
- Is a sink clean if it has been wiped out with a soapy sponge or does it require scrubbing with an abrasive cleanser? Should the fixtures also be cleaned with a particular solution?
- Does keeping these areas clean "at all times" mean that they should be cleaned and inspected once a day, once every other day, or each week?

It is the duty of jail officers to interpret jail standards and regulations for prisoners. When regulations are found to be too general to be followed without confusion, jailers must develop and agree on standards for maintaining cleanliness in the jail. And they must state these standards clearly and exactly to the prisoners, taking into account that some people don't understand directions as quickly or as easily as others.

2. No litter must be allowed to accumulate in any part of the cell.

What is litter? Some people feel that several magazines lying about are messy enough to be called 'litter'. Others consider litter to be actual garbage and trash lying on the floor. What do you consider to be litter? Gum wrappers, empty cigarette packages, library books stacked in the corners, month-old magazines?

Write your own definition of litter here:

NOW ASK YOURSELF: Is this definition of litter specific enough to make sure that every prisoner understands it? When prisoners are asked to clean up the litter in their cell area, will they know exactly what is meant?

If each prisoner understands what is meant by litter, then there will be no valid excuses for allowing it to accumulate in the cell areas. Your job of supervising prisoners will be easier when you define standards of cleanliness for the prisoners instead of making them guess what is meant.

3. Bedding must be kept clean and aired regularly.

STOP AND THINK: What does this statement mean to *you*?

Several persons were asked what they thought this statement means. The following answers indicate the extent to which personal standards of cleanliness can vary:

- "It means changing sheets and pillowcases once a week, and setting the mattress on end for a couple of hours and hanging the pillow out on the clothesline for an hour or two each month."
- "It means that you shouldn't make your bed as soon as you get out of it in the morning. I always get dressed and eat breakfast first so that the air can get to my sheets. Also, I change my sheets twice a week."
- "What do you mean aired regularly? Isn't it enough to change your sheets every week?"

Notice that each one of these people has his own standard for airing and cleaning bedding. Imagine how many different interpretations one would get from a cell block of prisoners and several jail officers! This problem could easily be solved by establishing a schedule for cleaning and airing beds and by a careful explanation of what the procedure involves.

In order to be fair to prisoners, you and the other jail officers should agree on your standards of cleanliness. How would you feel if, as a prisoner, you were asked to mop the floor and every jail officer who came through on his rounds criticised your work and made you do the work again in a different way?

These four officers work in a small county jail:

> Officer Charles Brand hates to see dirty windows in the jail. As a matter of fact, he insists on having the prisoners wash and wipe all the windows every day.
>
> Officer Holman thinks that the plumbing fixtures should be spotless and highly polished at all times. In order to accomplish this, he wants to have all the brasswork shined every day.
>
> Officer Earl Johnson likes to have the jail floors washed and scrubbed until they are "fit for me to eat my dinner off!"
>
> Officer John Schmit thinks that bars need constant scrubbing and washing. He consistently orders the prisoners to stop the other cleaning tasks until they have cleaned the bars to his satisfaction.

Obviously, these officers are making unreasonable demands on the prisoners who must do the cleaning in the jail. By insisting that their own personal preferences be fulfilled every day, they are creating confusion and, undoubtedly, bad morale among the prisoners. How do you think these officers could best deal with the situation?

Answer:

The solution is relatively easy. The four officers should get together and develop a regular cleaning schedule. For instance, on Mondays the windows could be washed thoroughly, on Tuesdays the prisoners could do a thorough job of cleaning and polishing the plumbing fixtures, etc. Under this system, the prisoners would know what is expected of them on each day and would not be antagonized or confused by the conflicting orders of individual jail officers.

It might be said that, although jail cleaning regulations are often too general and vague, a good jail officer can maintain consistently high standards of cleanliness in the jail if he: (*indicate correct answers*)

___ a) defines his own standards of cleanliness and enforces them.
___ b) agrees on standards of cleanliness with other officers and develops a regular cleaning schedule for the jail.
___ c) explains regulations and standards of cleanliness to the prisoners once. If they don't understand, he disciplines them for being inattentive.
___ d) inspects and supervises all cleaning operations to make sure that prisoners understand what is expected of them.
___ e) makes sure that his orders are clear and precise. If prisoners seem confused or unsure of cleaning procedures, he realizes that his explanation has probably not been clear enough and explains the procedure again, allowing prisoners to ask questions.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answers:

___ a) defines his own standards of cleanliness and enforces them.

X b) agrees on standards of cleanliness with other officers and develops a regular cleaning schedule for the jail.

___ c) explains regulations and standards of cleanliness to the prisoners once. If they don't understand, he disciplines them for being inattentive.

X d) inspects and supervises all cleaning operations to make sure that prisoners understand what is expected of them.

X e) makes sure that his orders are clear and precise. If prisoners seem confused or unsure of cleaning procedures, he realizes that his explanation has probably not been clear enough and explains the procedure again, allowing prisoners to ask questions.

An important aid for the supervisor in controlling housing areas in the jail is *commercial television*.

Many jails make it clear to prisoners that viewing commercial television is a *privilege*. Jail officers have found that when television viewing is offered as an incentive for good behavior and cleanliness, supervision of prisoners becomes an easier task. Also, personnel in these jails know that placing TVs *outside* of cells or bullpen areas is the best way to maintain control by the staff instead of prisoners.

In some jails, however, prisoners are allowed complete freedom of TV watching. In these cases, TV is not used as an incentive or reward, it is considered a *right* by prisoners. Supervision in these jails is often extremely difficult.

> In one jail, TVs are in the cell areas, completely controlled by prisoners. An inspector has noticed that, instead of performing normal cleaning chores, prisoners watch TV all day long, throwing cigarettes and trash around the cell area as they do so. Once, when a TV set was broken and the repairman did not appear within an hour, the prisoners tore the set to pieces and set fire to their mattresses in protest.

This situation would never have happened if: (*choose one or more*)

___ a) the prisoners were forbidden to throw trash in their cells.
___ b) the TV were in an area not under the control of the prisoners.
___ c) use of the TV were considered a privilege, not a right, and if prisoners were not allowed to watch TV until their chores were performed and their behavior acceptable.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answers:

___ a) the prisoners were forbidden to throw trash in their cells.
_X_ b) the TV were in an area not under the control of the prisoners.
_X_ c) use of the TV were considered a privilege, not a right, and if prisoners were not allowed to watch TV until their chores were performed and their behavior acceptable.

Effective supervision of dining situations also requires careful and imaginative techniques on the part of the jail officer.

For the confined person, food takes on an almost unnatural importance. Prisoner reaction to poorly prepared food, boring menus, or unfair distribution of food can result in serious behavioral problems and disturbances in the jail.

Most jails in this country employ a system of day room dining or food service to individual cells. However, some jails have large dining rooms and must use a system of central dining. For these jails, certain supervisory techniques must be employed to avoid mass misbehavior and chaos.

Naturally, each jail should have clearly stated rules for conduct in the dining room. Prisoners should be fully aware of what behavior is expected of them, and should not be surprised when a jail officer takes disciplinary action against them for violating a rule. Actual rules for the dining room are usually uncomplicated and generally deal with three main areas of behavior:

- maintenance of order in the serving line and during the actual meal
- fair distribution of food by servers to all prisoners
- control of utensils to avoid their removal from dining room

General supervision of the dining room can be accomplished by stationing jail officers at key locations throughout the area—or, if there is a shortage of officers on hand—by assigning officers to circulate around the dining room, paying close attention to critical areas.

One of the most critical areas of the dining room is the *serving line*. Here an officer must be alert to several types of misbehavior by prisoners:

- Some prisoners skip ahead of others in the serving line in order to be served first, or because they want to catch up with friends.
- Often prisoners jokingly push and shove each other while in the serving line and interfere with the normal progression of the line.

Both of these activities can easily begin fights and arguments among prisoners. The rules of the dining room should state specifically that skipping ahead or horseplay in line represent infractions of the dining room rules and will bring a warning by the jail officer in attendance.

In most jails, the actual serving of food is done by prisoners. This practice can give rise to much dissention and tension if it is not properly supervised.

- Prisoners serving food can be intimidated by stronger prisoners who desire extra servings of meat or dessert. Naturally, any special favors are readily seen by other inmates who understandably expect and angrily demand equal treatment.
- Prisoners who work in serving lines are especially subject to the temptation of trying to please a friend. All too often, a prisoner will try to give extra helpings or the most desirable cut of meat to special friends. Again, this situation can easily give rise to demands by other prisoners and possible fights.

Fights and tensions arising from these special considerations will seldom occur if a jail officer is stationed behind the serving line and pays careful attention to serving activities. If arguments do arise, an effective jail officer will quickly settle them by reason and firmness. Naturally, a good jail officer will make sure that he knows what kinds of problems can arise in the serving line as a result of 'special favors' and will be on the lookout for any signs that this practice exists.

Officer Carl Brown was stationed behind the serving line during the dinner hour. One of the prisoners, Al Carnes, was dishing out beef stew to the prisoners in line. One of the prisoners, Lem Starr, started to complain loudly that Carnes was giving him all gravy and no meat. Immediately, Brown stepped over to the spot and examined the prisoner's meat serving. "You're right, Mr. Starr, you do have a lot of gravy there. I'm sure Mr. Carnes didn't mean to shortchange you."

He then asked Carnes to dish out a portion with meat to Starr. During the rest of the serving process, Officer Brown kept a careful watch on Carnes to make sure he was serving all prisoners equally. When the prisoners had left the dining hall, Officer Brown took the prisoner aside and suggested firmly that he be more careful in the future about serving the meat equally and fairly.

Which of the following statements do you think are true? (*Choose one or more*)

___ a) Officer Brown used good judgement in dealing with this situation.

___ b) Officer Brown should have told Starr to keep moving and stop complaining.

___ c) Officer Brown should have corrected the prisoner serving the food as soon as the incident occurred.

___ d) By not correcting Carnes in front of the other prisoners, Officer Brown avoided possible tension in the dining room.

Turn page to check answer . . .

Answer:

X a) Officer Brown used good judgment in dealing with this situation.

___ b) Officer Brown should have told Starr to keep moving and stop complaining.

___ c) Officer Brown should have corrected the prisoner serving the food as soon as the incident occurred.

X d) By not correcting Carnes in front of the other prisoners, Officer Brown avoided possible tension in the dining room.

Since most jails operate on a tight budget, it is important that food not be wasted. As a result, many jails strictly enforce a regulation which states that prisoners must eat all the food they take. Often prisoners are unfairly punished for occasionally miscalculating their appetites and leaving food on their trays.

A good supervisor should be able to determine who are the chronic- or regular-food wasters, and who are only occasional offenders. Usually a man who wastes food regularly does so on purpose to attract attention or create a disturbance.

> In a small Western jail, all prisoners are made well aware of the rule that they will face disciplinary action if they purposely waste food. One day, prisoner Joe Ferris returned his tray, having left untouched his potatoes and a slice of bread and butter. The jail officer in charge mentioned the wasted food, and for the next three days, checked to see if Ferris was still leaving food on his plate. He made a note that Ferris was consistently wasting food and, on the fourth day, drew him aside as he returned his food and told him to report to the jail administrator.

In this case, the jail officer acted wisely. He waited for several days to make sure that Ferris was a chronic food waster. Then, instead of ordering Ferris to "clean his plate" like a child, he told him to report to the jail administrator for a talk and a possible disciplinary action.

Usually, in jails with dining rooms, supervising officers can inspect for wasted food at the same time that they watch prisoners returning utensils. Naturally, as a security precaution, the officers are expected to be especially alert at this time so that they will notice any prisoners who do not return the correct number of utensils and attempt to smuggle them out of the dining area.

The majority of jails serve meals in cells or in day rooms using a food cart and one or two trusties as servers.

Like the dining room system, there are several supervisory problems which arise in this type of serving situation. Choose the supervisory problems which you think are likely to arise in this type of serving situation:

___ a) stealing of utensils
___ b) complaints about cold food
___ c) unfair apportionment of food to friends of trusty
___ d) bullying of weaker prisoners by strong prisoners who want more food

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

All of these problems can occur when food cart service to cells or day rooms is employed!

Good supervision can eliminate these problems or at least keep them to a minimum. WHENEVER A JAIL USES FOOD CART SERVICE, A SUPERVISOR MUST ACCOMPANY EACH FOOD CART.

On the next few pages you will read of instances in which trusties were in charge of food carts and were *not* accompanied by a jail officer.

In one jail, there are continual complaints about cold and clammy food from the prisoners in the cells farthest from the kitchen. The trusty using the food cart uses the mealtime to visit with his friends and find out the most recent gossip. Naturally, by the time he gets to the last cell, the food is usually unpleasantly cold.

A midwestern jail continually has trouble with incidents arising from the use of utensils stolen from the food cart. Recently, a prisoner tried to make an excape by keeping a jail officer hostage with a stolen spoon which he had honed down to a razor-sharp edge.

Several fights have broken out in a Southern jail because the trusty in charge of food cart service shows favoritism and gives extra food and better slices of meat to his friends than to the other prisoners whom he serves.

One county jail officer discovered that one of the older prisoners was losing weight rapidly and becoming extremely weak and feeble. The jail doctor examined the man and found him to be suffering from malnutrition and near starvation. An investigation showed that the younger, stronger prisoners with the help of the trusty serving the food were taking the older prisoner's meat and dessert portions. The old man was too frightened to complain to the jail authorities.

QUESTION

How do you think each one of the problems you have just read about could have been either avoided or controlled?

Answer:

Each one of these problems could have been avoided if an alert jail officer had accompanied the food cart operation during each meal hour!

Whatever the type of food service in your jail, one of the critical areas of supervision is the *choice of inmates* who are to serve food.

No one would want to eat in a restaurant where the cook and the waiters had dirty fingernails, dirty hair and clothes, or smoked while serving food, often dropping ashes into the food! There is no reason to expect inmates to be any more tolerant of filthy personal habits on the part of the people who serve food to them. A good supervisor must consider it an important part of his job to frequently inspect to see that high standards of cleanliness are being maintained by inmates chosen to serve food.

Note:

Prisoners often harbor resentment against sex offenders and homosexuals. For this reason, it is considered poor supervisory practice to place men known for these offenses in a position where they serve food to other inmates.

So far, we have discussed general supervisory principles and some special supervisory situations, such as:

- Supervision of trusties
- Need for personal supervision in the jail
- Supervision of standards of cleanliness
- Supervision of TV
- Supervision of food service

Other special supervisory problems will be discussed in the remaining segment of this chapter. Right now, however, is a good time to take a break if you need one. Return to this material as soon as you are ready.

Administration and supervision of *sick call* in the jail is one of the critical aspects of the jail operation. Neglect of a prisoner's health needs can lead to severe illness or even death. And since the jail is entrusted with the welfare and safekeeping of each prisoner, proof of negligence can bring serious legal consequences to the jail and to the personnel involved.

No matter what the size or location of a jail, any jail officer assigned to supervision of sick call is concerned with three main objectives:

- Administration of proper attention to all prisoners with medical complaints
- Control of all administration and taking of medicine
- Control of prisoner behavior during the actual sick call procedure.

It is *not* the responsibility of the jail officer to decide whether a prisoner is sick or just 'goldbricking'.

It *is* the responsibility of the jail officer to forward *all* medical complaints made by prisoners to the proper medical authority for consideration.

> Prisoner John Stone complains regularly of a sharp pain in his back. Officer George Jahns is in charge of sick call in the jail and thinks that Stone is trying to get sympathy by complaining about an imaginary pain.

What is Jahns' responsibility? (choose one)

___ a) Jahns should save the doctor the bother of examining the prisoner since he is obviously faking.

___ b) Jahns should report the complaint to the doctor and let *him* decide whether the prisoner's complaint is real.

___ c) Jahns should give the prisoner a tranquilizer and see if he still complains the next day.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

b) is the correct procedure. Jahn's responsibility to the prisoners is to see that their medical complaints are referred to the proper authority.

Note:

Answer c) indicates a dangerous attitude in some jails. All too often, jail officers consider themselves the 'proper authority' and administer drugs which they know nothing about.

Prisoners often feign illness while they are in jail in an attempt to receive special attention or comfort. These prisoners are a continual problem to a busy staff. However, they are a medical problem, not a supervisory one. If the jail staff decides to prevent a man from receiving medical attention and he becomes seriously ill as a result, the legal and moral responsibility for the illness is entirely theirs.

The best policy when dealing with these prisoners is to allow them to report repeatedly for sick call. There is always a chance that they have a legitimate complaint, as the following example shows:

> Prisoner Larry Burns was known throughout the jail as an habitual complainer and hypochondriac. In addition, he had an unpleasant personality and a poor attitude. He had often reported for sick call only to be told by the doctor that there was absolutely nothing wrong with him.
>
> One day Burns reported for sick call complaining of stomach pains. Officer Henry Clayton was infuriated and told Burns: "Go back to your cell and don't waste any more of the doctor's time!"
>
> Luckily, the doctor overheard this and suggested that he take the prisoner's temperature as a precaution. Burns was found to be in need of an emergency appendectomy!

Burns might easily have died if his condition had been ignored. This example is not an isolated one. It represents incidents which happen frequently in jails where jail personnel take a personal view of prisoner behavior and ignore established procedures.

Although the prescription of medication is done solely by the physician in charge, the actual day-to-day taking of the pills by prisoners is the responsibility of the jail personnel.

Supervision of pill-taking is an extremely important responsibility. Jail officers must be continually alert, since prisoners often try to accumulate pills to "get high", to exchange with other prisoners for cigarettes or candy, or, in some cases, to commit suicide.

The jail officer supervising the taking of medicine is responsible for seeing that:

- each prisoner receives the correct dosage at the correct time
- the prisoner actually swallows the medication and does not hide it in his mouth or hand

Recently, in a large county jail, a busy jail officer was asked by the jail physician to administer a dosage of sleeping pills to an extremely nervous prisoner for several days before the prisoner's trial.

The jail officer gave the prisoner the pills each day as instructed, making no effort to watch while the prisoner took the pills.

On the morning of the trial, the prisoner was found dead in his cell—he had taken an overdose of sleeping pills. Obviously, he had managed to save up enough pills, without the officer's knowledge, to commit suicide.

Which of the following statements do you consider to be true?: *(choose one or more)*

___ a) The jailer made an honest mistake.
___ b) The jailer was guilty of the negligence which caused the prisoner's death.
___ c) The doctor was responsible for this tragedy—he should have known better than to give sleeping pills to a suicidal prisoner.
___ d) The jailer's responsibility ended when he gave the correct dosage of pills to the prisoner.
___ e) The jailer's responsibility included checking carefully to see that the pills had been actually swallowed at the proper times.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) The jailer made an honest mistake.

_X_ b) The jailer was guilty of the negligence which caused the prisoner's death.

___ c) The doctor was responsible for this tragedy—he should have known better than to give sleeping pills to a suicidal prisoner.

___ d) The jailer's responsibility ended when he gave the correct dosage of pills to the prisoner.

_X_ e) The jailer's responsibility included checking carefully to see that the pills had been actually swallowed at the proper times.

You might think that the jailer "made an honest mistake", but in the jail there is no room for this type of mistake. A jailer must understand his responsibility fully and be certain that he has acted at all times in accordance with this responsibility.

There are many other cases where the failure of a jail officer to notice that a prisoner has not taken medicine results in serious consequences. Many jails report that epileptics have hidden their medication instead of taking it and had serious seizures as a result. Often epileptics, hoping to trade their pills with other prisoners wishing to "get high", only pretend to swallow them. In these cases, failure to take medication can result in severe consequences.

Ingenious persons can hide pills in the cheek, under the tongue, or in the palm of the hand between the thumb and forefinger. Some jails try to combat this practice by requiring what is called a *medication line* during sick call. While in line, each prisoner is required to take his medicine while a supervisor watches him carefully. Usually the jail officer supervising the line requires two things:

- the prisoner must show that the pill is in his mouth
- the prisoner must *drink water* while swallowing the pill

As an extra precaution, many jail officers also inspect the prisoner's mouth with a tongue depressor to make sure that the pill has been swallowed.

No matter whether the prisoner is given medication while in a line or in his cell, strict procedures must be followed. Not only should a jail officer observe the prisoner while he is taking the medication, but he should always (1) make a careful record of the time the dosage was taken and, (2) place his initials after the notation. These notations should become part of the prisoner's medical record.

Record-keeping is crucial to the success of the medical program in any jail. If good records are kept, there can be no doubt about the quality of care given to each prisoner. If records are *not* kept, jail personnel may become subject to untrue accusations by prisoners who claim they were not given sufficient medical care.

Each jail officer should be completely familiar with the policy of medical record-keeping in his jail. Although policy differs in each jail, some *basic* rules for medical record-keeping in the jail are:

- No jail officer should accept verbal orders from a doctor unless the doctor promises to send signed, written orders to the jail.
- The time and date of each visit by a doctor should be recorded.
- Administration of medicine to prisoners should be recorded by time, date and name of officer giving dosage.
- If a doctor has been called concerning a certain prisoner, a record should be made of the officer making the call, the time and date of the call, and the reason for calling.

The following incident involves a jail which has *no* system of medical record-keeping.

> A prisoner confined in a local jail awaiting trial complained of a painful, ulcerated toe. The doctor was called and, after an examination, prescribed medication. After several days, the medication had not helped and the doctor prescribed another drug over the phone. After four weeks, the toe had to be amputated. Two months later, the prisoner's leg had to be removed below the knee.
>
> The prisoner made a formal charge in a court of law that the jail had been negligent and had failed to provide him with medical attention.

Knowing as you do that the jail kept no medical records, do you think the prisoner was successful in his court case against the jail?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

Yes, the prisoner was successful. Since the jail had no medical records, the sheriff could not contest the charges. The incident caused quite a scandal that was needlessly damaging to the previously good reputation of the jail.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR JAIL KEEPS ADEQUATE RECORDS OF MEDICAL TREATMENT. If your jail does *not* keep adequate medical records, you should suggest that careful record-keeping be started.

Notice how easily this jail avoided legal difficulties:

A local jail in a Western state employs a full-time nurse. Along with her other tasks, she keeps complete detailed records of all sick call attendance and medical treatments or examinations occurring in the jail.

A federal prisoner being held in this jail filed suit charging that the jail had refused to give him medical care. He claimed that a jail officer had slammed a door on his hand and that he had received no medical care. The nurse was able to prove with the medical records that the prisoner had reported for sick call three times for *other* unrelated complaints *after* the incident supposedly occurred. It was shown that on none of these occasions did he complain of a sore hand. When the prisoner realized how thorough the records were, he quickly withdrew his suit, realizing that he could never prove negligence.

It might be said that even if a jail provides excellent professional medical care to prisoners, it might *still* face serious legal problems unless:

___ a) prisoners are forbidden to file suit against the jail.
___ b) the staff makes sure that prisoners take their medication.
___ c) jail personnel are required to keep consistently detailed medical records.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) prisoners are forbidden to file suit against the jail.
___ b) the staff makes sure that prisoners take their medication.
_X_ c) jail personnel are required to keep consistently detailed medical reports.

No one can deny the obvious benefits of allowing prisoners to receive visitors while in jail. There is no doubt that personal visits by family and friends significantly improve prisoner morale and, in general, can make a jail sentence more bearable.

However, for the jail staff, visiting day can be a severe test of supervisory ability. As far as the staff is concerned, visits by outsiders to the jail can cause serious lapses in jail security. Contraband in the form of drugs, alcohol, tools, or weapons can be smuggled into the jail by visitors. And, in many cases, visitors can assist prisoners in escape attempts which may endanger the lives of every person in the jail.

The degree of supervision necessary for a successful and safe visiting situation often depends largely on the physical arrangements of the visiting area. For instance:

- *Telephone in a glass separation in visiting area*
  Here the prisoner and his visitor are totally separated. Minimal supervision is required, and often, if there are few visitors, the visiting time is not limited.
- *Wire mesh screen separation*
  The screen does not permit physical contact or passing of contraband. However, careful supervision is required to keep the noise level down and to prevent tampering with the screen.
- *Table separation*
  Prisoners are separated from visitors by a board which divides the two sides of the table. Very close surveillance supervision is required in this case since contraband can easily be passed over the board or dropped on the floor and passed under the table.
- *Lounge visiting area*
  Since prisoners and guests are allowed to sit together in this informal lounge arrangement, contraband can easily be exchanged. With this type of arrangement, security can best be maintained by a careful search of each prisoner when the visiting period is over.

Introduction of contraband into the jail by visitors is the most persistent and serious problem brought about by visiting situations.

|| Does your jail allow visitors to bring packages to prisoners? ||

Read what happened in a jail that does allow visitors to bring packages.

A prisoner's wife hid a gun, a knife and five twenty-dollar bills in three boxes of commercially made cookies. She had carefully unsealed each box, removed some of the cookies and replaced them with the contraband, and then resealed them. The jail officers dutifully delivered these packages, assuming that they contained only cookies.

As a result, three dangerous prisoners escaped and two jail officers were wounded.

In a small county jail, one prisoner—in a jail for drunkenness—was found to be intoxicated every Tuesday (visiting day). Mystified, the jail officers finally decided to inspect the prisoner's food packages that his wife had been bringing each week.

Sure enough, each one of a dozen oranges she had packed had been injected with an ounce of vodka!

Having read these two examples, do you think it is a good policy to allow prisoners to accept food packages from visitors?

Turn page for answer . . .

Answer:

It is very *poor* supervisory policy. Naturally, it seems kinder to allow prisoners to have treats from home, but since jails are expected to feed prisoners adequately, home cooking (and contraband) should be denied.

Note:

If your jail insists on allowing prisoners to receive food packages, why not ask your jail administrator to read the two examples just given?

You might also warn him that a popular brand of smoking tobacco now packs a cast aluminum pipe reamer and tamper in each package. The item is about three inches long and is very sturdy. Not a bad weapon!

Other careless supervisory practices can lead to introduction of contraband into the jail by visitors.

One local jail has an excellent visiting room where security can be easily maintained by jail officers. In spite of this, visitors can be seen wandering all through the jail with prisoners on visiting day. The sheriff in charge argues that he doesn't need to use the visiting room because all the prisoners are "local people" and can be trusted.

This reasoning is foolish and dangerous. The fact that a prisoner is a "local boy", doesn't automatically mean that he is not an escape risk. The prisoner who received the cookie boxes with hidden contraband was a local boy—and two jail officers were wounded in his escape!

Since a jail officer cannot be expected to see and hear everything that goes on during a visiting session it is an extremely good supervisory policy to employ search procedures when the visit is over.

Some jails leave no room for error and give a complete *strip search* to every prisoner after each visiting session.

Other jails issue *special visiting clothes* that prisoners must remove at the end of the visit under supervision of a jail officer.

Some jail officers use their own judgment and merely give *random searches* to prisoners returning from visits. In these cases, if an officer suspects a particular prisoner of carrying contraband, he singles him out and performs a complete strip search.

In some jails, prisoners are allowed to kiss visiting girl friends or wives. Often jail officers, wanting to allow the couple privacy, will look away while they embrace. However, these officers don't seem to realize that many clever prisoners can arrange to pass drugs, money, or small weapons and tools while embracing!

If your jail allows prisoners to embrace wives or girlfriends, what do you think is the best supervisory policy for the jail officer?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

Certainly an alert jail officer should not allow lengthy or passionate embraces. He should be prepared to ask the couple to stop and perhaps, if he suspects the couple's actions, he will make a point of *searching the prisoner* for contraband before allowing him to return to his cell after the visit.

In general, the success of visiting situations is entirely dependent on the ability of jail officers to listen for, look for and sense any suspicious behavior.

It is the jail officer's duty to *stop* excess noise and confusion before it becomes a distraction and prevents him from performing his job efficiently. If visits become too noisy and distracting, the officer in charge must tell the people involved that he will end the visit if the noise does not stop immediately. And if disturbances do occur, he must get help immediately instead of thinking he can handle things himself.

Officer Paul Steen was in charge of supervising a recent visit in which eight prisoners were visiting with their families. Since he was the only officer in the visiting room, he was kept very busy watching and listening to all of these visits at once.

Suddenly a prisoner stood up and started swearing and shouting at his family and at the other people in the room. Steen quickly escorted the prisoner back to his cell.

Can you find anything wrong with Officer Steen's actions?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

Steen should have sought the help of another officer and asked *him* to escort the prisoner back to his cell. It is not a good policy to leave a visiting session unsupervised unless, perhaps, the jail has the type of equipment which requires visits to be carried on by telephone through a glass partition.

Every prisoner has the right to visit with an attorney of his own choosing. Naturally, this type of visit—a professional visit—has supervisory requirements that are different from those followed for regular family visits.

During regular visits by family and friends, jail officers should be concerned with maintaining order and security. As we have seen, introduction of contraband is the most serious concern in supervising these visits.

When supervising a professional visit, however, a jail officer must be concerned with:

- making sure that the visit is completely confidential
- making sure that prisoners are made available to attorneys whenever a reasonable request is made

Keeping professional visits *confidential* means:

- making sure that *no* electronic device is being used to listen to conversations
- making sure that no one is either listening to or overhearing the conversation between the prisoner and his attorney
- if an officer does overhear the conversation accidentally, he must be certain that he does *not* repeat or discuss any of it

In one county jail, visiting rooms are provided for professional visits. Although each room has a window placed low enough for easy visual supervision, the sheriff requires that the doors of these rooms be left open during visits so that jail officers can closely supervise them. The rooms are located on a busy hallway where prisoners, jail officers and visitors pass regularly. Frequently jail officers pause outside the rooms and listen to the conversation.

In this case it can be said that: (*choose one or more*)

___ a) The prisoner and his attorney are being denied their right to a confidential visit.

___ b) In this jail, maintenance of security incorrectly takes precedence over maintenance of the legal rights of prisoners.

___ c) The doors to the visiting room should be closed during visits and jail officers should be required to merely *observe* the visit through the windows.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

All of these statements are correct. In the situation described, the confidential nature of the profes nal visit was not respected and it would be easy for anyone to overhear the conversation between the prisoner and his attorney.

In some instances, a prisoner's attorney might want to leave papers in the jail for the prisoner either to sign or to study. When papers are left in the jail, it is good supervisory policy for a jail officer to take a brief inventory of the papers—i.e., number of pages, type of document, etc.

> Officer Browning prides himself on his ability to talk to prisoners and establish an easy rapport with them. One day after making a required inventory of legal papers being brought to the jail, Officer Browning saw the prisoner involved and said in a friendly way: "Hi, Joe. I see you're going to plead self-defense on Friday. Good luck, we had a prisoner in here once who lost a case where he made a similar plea. Hope you do better."

The prisoner's reaction to this comment was anger, and he threatened to make a formal complaint to his lawyer about the officer. The officer's remarks were an obvious indication that: (choose the correct answer)

___ a) He didn't know anything about the law.
___ b) He had violated the prisoner's right to an entirely confidential meeting with his lawyer.
___ c) He wanted to harass the prisoner and make him anxious about the upcoming trial.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) He didn't know anything about the law.

X b) He had violated the prisoner's right to an entirely confidential meeting with his lawyer.

___ c) He wanted to harass the prisoner and make him anxious about the upcoming trial.

Any officer supervising a visit between a prisoner and his attorney must also see to it that every *reasonable* request by an attorney to see a prisoner is promptly granted.

Naturally, each jail has a different daily schedule and differing staff requirements. However, it is generally considered *unreasonable* for an attorney to request a visit with a prisoner at these times:

- during mealtimes in the jail
- when a prisoner count is being conducted
- when there is a shortage of jail personnel on duty (for example, Sunday night) and it would not be practical or safe for a jail officer to leave his post to escort the prisoner out of the cell hall and supervise the visit

At almost any other time, a request by an attorney to see a prisoner must be considered *reasonable* and should receive prompt attention by jail officers.

Visits by members of the clergy are also considered *professional* visits. In other words, when a clergymen requests a visit with a prisoner, the visit should be: (*choose one or more*)

___ a) granted promptly by the jail officer as long as the request is reasonable
___ b) carefully guarded and listened to by jail officers
___ c) granted at any time the clergyman desires
___ d) kept absolutely confidential

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

X a) granted promptly by the jail officer as long as the request is reasonable
___ b) carefully guarded and listened to by jail officers
___ c) granted at any time the clergyman desires
X d) kept absolutely confidential

Often jails have their own chapels and conduct regular religious services. These services are frequently open to outsiders. During religious services, prisoners normally require only minimal supervision. The jail officer in charge can control the situation if he follows these rules:

- The jail officer should make sure that services begin *on time* and that prisoners return to their cells immediately after the service.
- Prisoners must *not* be allowed to sit with visitors or to mix with them in any way. When services end, visitors should stay seated until all the prisoners have returned to their cells. (In some jails, prisoners who have been carefully *classified* as minimum security prisoners *are* allowed to mix with visitors.)

Can you think of reasons why these rules should be followed closely when supervising religious services?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

When prisoners are allowed to loiter before services start and after they end, it is quite possible that unnecessary arguments will arise, thus creating a new supervisory problem.

If prisoners are allowed to mix with visitors, contraband can easily be passed. For this reason, allowing prisoners and visitors to mix during religious services is considered a serious lapse in jail security.

Recreation can provide a welcome and necessary boost to the physical and mental health of prisoners who might otherwise present a disciplinary problem. Recognizing this fact, some jails have well-organized recreation programs. Naturally, in order to insure the success of these programs, certain basic supervisory techniques should be used by jail officers.

Each jail has its own regulations about care of athletic equipment. However, it is generally the duty of the supervisor to:

- see that each piece of equipment is signed out by a prisoner and returned by the same prisoner
- determine whether or not the equipment has been mistreated by the prisoner handling it

In jails where organized games are played, prisoners should be permitted to choose their own umpires and referees. In this case, the supervising officer should mainly be concerned with disagreements which arise among players and umpires. If an argument arises over a "bad call", the supervisor should remind the players that *they* chose the umpire and should abide by his decisions. A good idea would be for the supervisor to keep a rule book available for reference when arguments persist. The only responsibility of the jail officer supervising recreation is to *keep order* and to make sure that the period is run according to schedule.

Officer Joe Boles likes to play baseball and often participates when he is given the assignment of supervising recreation. He gets so involved in playing the game that he often joins the inmates when they protest about an umpire making a "bad call".

Officer Boles demonstrated that: (choose correct answer)

___ a) He is a good supervisor and establishes excellent rapport with the prisoners

___ b) He is a good baseball player and likes to keep in shape

___ c) He is a poor supervisor and ignores his supervisory responsibility

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) He is a good supervisor and establishes excellent rapport with the prisoners

___ b) He is a good baseball player and likes to keep in shape

_X_ c) He is a poor supervisor and ignores his supervisory responsibility

---

Participation by jail officers in jail recreation can often lead to over-familiarity by the prisoners. Read what happened in one jail:

> Officer John Peoples used to do some amateur wrestling when he was in the Army twenty-five years ago. One day a prisoner challenged him to a good-natured wrestling match. Peoples accepted and soon found out that he was outclassed by the prisoner. The match was stopped after several minutes because Peoples was losing so badly. After the match, prisoners called him "Killer John" and laughed about the winning hammer lock whenever he was on duty.

Officer Peoples' participation in prisoner recreation led to: (choose one)

___ a) loss of prisoner respect for him as an officer
___ b) a better, more relaxed atmosphere in the jail

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

X a) loss of prisoner respect for him as an officer

___ b) a better, more relaxed atmosphere in the jail

In general, a jail officer's duty when supervising sports activities is: (choose correct answers)

___ a) to choose an umpire
___ b) to see that equipment is checked out and returned in good condition
___ c) to participate along with the prisoners if he knows he is good at a sport
___ d) to allow the prisoners to choose an umpire and see that they abide by his decisions without arguing
___ e) to keep order by *observing* the activity and by stopping arguments before they become serious

Turn page for answers

Answer:

___ a) to choose an umpire
X b) to see that equipment is checked out and returned in good condition
___ c) to participate along with the prisoners if he knows he is good at a sport
X d) to allow the prisoners to choose an umpire and see that they abide by his decisions without arguing
X e) to keep order by *observing* the activity and by stopping arguments before they become serious

III. SPECIAL SUPERVISORY SITUATIONS

"The first blow from that hammer was like a light bulb exploding in my head. He kept pounding me and yelling, 'I'm going to cut your throat if you don't give me those keys!' "

Those were the words of a jail officer who was attacked without warning by a hammer-wielding trusty who was trying to escape from a county jail. In this jail the trusty was allowed the special privilege of not being locked in a cell at night and also had the privilege of easy access to the tool room.

The term 'trusty' is a misleading one. Contrary to the title, a trusty *cannot* be trusted to work totally alone and unsupervised. He should *not* be given authority over other prisoners, and he should *not* have any special privileges.

Trusties should be individuals who have been screened and have been evaluated as people who are:

- easy to supervise
- dependable under minimum supervision
- not disciplinary problems

Many jails automatically use their "regulars" as trusties. Usually these are the men who are regularly in a jail on charges of drunkenness. Unfortunately, these regulars are thoroughly trusted by jail officers simply because they are recognized and well-known in the jail. Officers often fail to realize that prisoners like these can sometimes be bribed to bring in contraband or assist in an escape attempt.

A trusty in a midwestern jail was allowed free access to the jail storeroom. This room had a window that was unprotected by bars or a screen.

Friends of some prisoners passed a loaded gun, hacksaw blade, chisels, knives and other tools through this window. They offered the trusty a bottle of liquor if he would deliver the contraband to the prisoners upstairs. The prisoners escaped two nights later.

Three things are considered when a man is being evaluated for trusty status.

- Is the prisoner a security risk?
- Are the prisoner's work habits good?
- Has his behavior in confinement been consistent and untroublesome?

Jail officers play an important role in the decision-making process because they can supply much of this information about prisoners being considered for trusty status.

> Officer John Holman was aked by the sheriff if he thought a prisoner, Harold Tompkins, could be given trusty status. At first, Holman fully endorsed the idea, stating that Tompkins was a hard worker and a good prisoner. However, he then remembered that lately the prisoner had been having emotional arguments with his wife on visiting day. Holman remembered that after the last visiting day, Tompkins had been moody and bitter. He had overheard Tompkins say to the other prisoners, "If only I could get out of this place, I'm sure I could clear up my problems at home."

After hearing this information about the prisoner, the sheriff decided that he would not give him trusty status. Why do you think the sheriff denied Tompkins trusty status?

Turn page to check your answer.

Answer:

The information that the officer gave concerning the prisoner indicated that he was a possible escape risk. The sheriff knew that prisoners often try to escape when they are having problems at home. Officer Holman's information was extremely important in this case.

Prisoner Joe Grange was being considered for trusty status. He was well-behaved, even-tempered and a hard-worker. Officer Cain, who usually supervises the prisoner on work details, offered the information that the prisoner did his work well but needed constant direction and encouragement. While mopping floors, he often stopped and asked the supervising officer if he was doing the job correctly and frequently asked questions about what to do next.

On the basis of this information, the prisoner was not granted trusty status. Since trusties in this jail receive only minimum supervision, it was felt that Grange would not be able to perform his tasks well without the constant supervision which he seemed to want and need.

Prisoner Hal Jaffers was being considered for trusty status. As far as the sheriff was concerned, Jaffers was a model prisoner; well-behaved, hard-working and independent. Officer Len Barnes mentioned that Jaffers did not get along well with the jail officers who saw him every day. To them, Jaffers was a "know-it-all". He always suggested a better way for them to perform their job as officers. Also, Barnes remembered that Jaffers had once organized a "sanitation committee" in the jail and had managed to fine other prisoners for any dirt or clutter found in their cells.

In spite of this information, Jaffers was made a trusty. Within a month, the jail was full of contraband smuggled in by Jaffers. He had proved himself a "smart operator" and had considered it a challenge to smuggle in contraband "under the noses" of the jail staff.

The above example points out that: (choose correct answer)

___ a) It is easy to make a mistake when choosing a trusty

___ b) The information supplied by jail officers about prisoners is a vitally important factor in the choice of trusties

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

___ a) It is easy to make a mistake when choosing a trusty

X b) The information supplied by jail officers about prisoners is a vitally important factor in the choice of trusties

The jail officer's information is extremely important when choosing trusties. In many cases, officers supply information about prisoners which is not shown in the records or known to jail administrators.

It has been stated that trusties should require only *minimum supervision* by jail officers. This is *only* true when trusty job assignments are such things as:

- cleaning jobs within the security area
- general clerical work
- washing dishes and pans in the jail kitchen

HOWEVER, many jails assign trusties to perform jobs which affect the well-being of other prisoners. When performing this type of task, trusties *MUST be supervised closely*.

Choose the jobs which you think require close supervision of trusties by jail officers.

___ a) typing the week's menus
___ b) serving food to cells
___ c) typing cell assignments
___ d) mopping the floors within the security area
___ e) processing prisoner records
___ f) acting as medical orderly for the jail doctor

Turn page to check your answers . . .

Answer:

b) serving food to cells
c) typing cell assignments
e) processing prisoner records
f) acting as medical orderly for the jail doctor

These are all jobs which directly affect the well-being of other prisoners. If these jobs are to be performed by trusties, they should be *closely supervised* by jail officers.

It is considered good jail policy to house trusties in areas where they do not come in contact with regular prisoners. We have seen that often trusties are subject to bribery and will assist in escapes or bring contraband into the jail. However, many jails do not have the facilities for housing trusties separately.

If your jail does not house trusties separately, what do you think is a good supervisory policy for jail officers to follow?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

An alert and conscientious jail officer follows a policy of *conducting frequent searches of trusties*. This is an especially important policy if the trusties work outside the jail or live with the regular prisoners.

Many jail inspectors have noticed that trusty cells are usually the dirtiest and messiest in the jail. This is because jail officers often forget that trusties are prisoners too, and they often neglect to make trusties follow jail regulations for cleanliness. Imagine how many unnecessary and unpleasant incidents occur in jails where trusty cells are not inspected for contraband and are not kept clean and uncluttered!

In one jail, where trusties are allowed to carry and use jail keys by careless jail officers, a trusty released a felony prisoner and allowed him to escape. While he was leaving the jail, he wounded several jail officers with the gun that the trusty had given him.

In another jail, after visiting day, a prisoner made an escape using a gun that his wife had brought for him. She had put it in a wastepaper basket and had bribed the trusty cleaning the area to deliver the weapon. Officers did not search the trusty as he entered the cell area because they *trusted* him completely.

Four officers were wounded and one policeman was killed in this escape.

A casual, lazy attitude towards supervision of trusties by jail officers can lead to countless dangerous situations in the jail. The list of incidents is endless. Time and time again jails report that they have trusted, respected and given important responsibilities to trusties, only to be rewarded by an escape, the smuggling in of contraband, or a trusty-sponsored drunken jailhouse brawl.

Learn from experience. Don't be the kind of jail officer *who thinks the term TRUSTY means "to be trusted"*.

We have seen that, ideally, trusties should be housed separately and should be supervised in a different manner from other prisoners. Two other types of prisoner require different supervisory treatment also:

- Juveniles
- Females

It is widely believed that juveniles do *not* belong in a jail. However, many localities have no facilities, other than the jail, for handling juveniles who have committed an offense. Where this is true, jail officers must learn how to supervise juveniles.

Does your jail house juveniles? Do you know under what age your state considers a prisoner to be a juvenile? The age limit varies from state to state. Make *sure* that you know what a juvenile is in your state.

A universal rule to follow when keeping juveniles is:

A juvenile must *always* be kept apart from adult prisoners. Under no circumstances should a juvenile be put in cells or living areas with adults. And, ideally, juveniles should be out of range of adults so that they will not be exposed to objectionable or abnormal behavior by adults.

Juveniles are favorite victims of more experienced, older prisoners. Often juveniles are thoughtlessly placed in jail cells with adult prisoners who take physical advantage of them. In many jails, officers assign an adult prisoner to each juvenile in the mistaken belief that the adult will protect the youth from other prisoners.

In one known case, the protecting adult assigned to a juvenile was nicknamed "Joe Sex" by prisoners who knew of his homosexual tendencies.

A good jail officer will follow the following rule when supervising juveniles in the jail: (choose appropriate answer)

___ a) Assign a trustworthy adult prisoner to protect juveniles while they are in the jail.

___ b) Make frequent patrols to see that the prisoners are not taking advantage of juveniles.

___ c) Keep juveniles totally separate from adult prisoners.

Answer:

___ a) Assign a trustworthy adult prisoner to protect juveniles while they are in the jail.

___ b) Make frequent patrols to see that the prisoners are not taking advantage of juveniles.

_X_ c) Keep juveniles totally separate from adult prisoners.

Keeping juveniles in separate quarters is not the only supervisory duty required of jail officers in charge of them.

Young people when confined are likely to become bored, restless and destructive.

You should, therefore:

- Use extra patience and understanding when dealing with juveniles
- Be on the alert for trouble or disturbances

Above all, a good jail officer should know the value of *constant surveillance* when dealing with juveniles.

> One juvenile, left alone for hours at a time while confined in the jail, became depressed and successfully committed suicide. Too late, the jail officer learned the importance of constant checking and surveillance.

Juveniles are frequently overly sensitive and have a great need for security and friendship. In the above example, an occasional kind word or conversation may have prevented even the attempt at suicide.

Often youthful pranks can turn into emergencies when jail officers do not patiently supervise and patrol juvenile living areas constantly.

> In one jail, juveniles set small fires in their cells to annoy the jail officer on duty. Having lost his patience with these pranks, the officer decided to teach the boys a lesson. When they called for help, he didn't respond immediately as he had before. By the time he entered the juvenile living area, a mattress had caught fire and the young prisoners were overcome with smoke poisoning.

Jail officers should be understanding and wary of the highly emotional and volatile nature of many juveniles.

> In one northern jail, an officer ignored what seemed to be a minor disagreement between two juveniles and left them to settle it themselves. By the time he returned on patrol, one of the young prisoners had lost control of his temper and badly beaten the other youth.

A tendency of youth is to act impulsively. Jail officers should realize this and not allow security precautions to become lax or careless in the juvenile section. Often, in cases where adult prisoners would never attack or threaten a jail officer, a youthful prisoner will, without considering the consequences.

Can you list the important elements of successful supervision of juveniles?

Answer:

Although your wording will naturally be different from that of the course, your answer should include the following:

- patience and understanding—a willingness to give juveniles special attention and time
- a firm policy of constant, careful surveillance
- maintenance of good security procedures

Although female prisoners rarely require strict security measures, a jail matron should learn all that has been discussed previously in this chapter regarding prisoner supervision. Although women prisoners seldom present the danger that men do, they are often responsible for smuggling contraband and for aiding in escapes.

Supervision of women does present some unique problems as you will see on the next few pages.

Just as juveniles must be housed separately from the adult males, so must women. It doesn't take much imagination to think of the problems which arise if men and women prisoners are *not* effectively kept separate. When housing men and women separately, there must be *no* possibility of communication by sight or sound.

> In one old southern jail, females were placed in a cell next to a cell full of men. They were able to easily break through the old cinder block walls which separated the cells. One woman prisoner became pregnant as a result of her visits with the men in the neighboring cell!
>
> In another jail, male prisoners were able to climb through a ventilation tunnel to a women's dormitory where they subsequently held a wild party!

All supervision of female prisoners must be by female employees. Male jail officers should *not* be responsible for any supervisory activities involving female prisoners.

> One small jail employs a part-time matron. When she is off-duty, a male officer takes over the supervisory duties. Recently, he suspected a woman of carrying contraband and conducted a search of the woman's cell and belongings. She immediately made a formal, legal complaint against him accusing him of rape.

Just as no males must supervise women prisoners, male employees should *not* be allowed to enter the female section.

> Recently, in a small jail, a female prisoner successfully smuggled dangerous drugs to the male section. It was found that she had put them in a cigarette package and had asked a male janitor working in her section to deliver the "cigarettes" to her boyfriend in the male section.

Naturally, it is the duty of a jail matron to make sure that *no male prisoners* are allowed in the women's section UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. All too often, trusties are allowed to wander freely between sections. Imagine the problems which arise in these jails!

> In one jail, a trusty was allowed complete freedom of movement and had his own set of keys. The matron of the women's section did not think it at all unusual that he was spending a good deal of time in the day room of the women's section. She was amazed and puzzled when one of her prisoners became pregnant!

Passing of contraband between the male and female sections is a common problem in many jails.

How do you think a female matron could prevent this type of illegal activity?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

An effective female supervisor will inspect any materials, supplies, books and other items that are brought to the woman's section from the main jail. Frequently, notes concerning escape plans and dangerous contraband have been found by alert matrons.

Likewise, an excellent supervisory policy is to frequently check to see that nothing leaves the female cell area without a thorough inspection.

List the policies that a jail matron should follow at all times when supervising female prisoners:

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

A matron should see that:

- Females are kept totally segregated from male prisoners, employees and officers
- All articles entering or leaving the women's section should be carefully examined for contraband or notes

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Attendance by prisoners at funerals is considered a *privilege*. It is a privilege granted by the jail administrator to prisoners who are *not* considered to be serious escape risks. Naturally, since the prisoner and the jail officer will be in a public place, special supervisory techniques must be employed during these visits.

Above all, the prisoner and his family must be told what will be expected of them during the visit. The jail officer in charge of the prisoner should inform them of the following:

- The prisoner may not leave the room where the event is being held without the escorting officer
- No special requests by the family will be considered

> Recently, the family of a prisoner attending the funeral of his father asked his escorting officer if he could go home for a short private visit. According to them, the prisoner's mother was extremely upset and wanted to spend an hour or two alone with the family. The officer sympathized and granted the request. He took the prisoner to the house and was kept busy in a room where family members were gathered. In the meantime, the prisoner escaped.

Obviously, this escape would not have happened if: (choose the correct answer)

___ a) The officer had gone along to the prisoner's home
___ b) If the prisoner had been wearing handcuffs
___ c) If the jail officer had told the prisoner and his family before the funeral that no special requests would be granted

Turn page to check your answer.

Answer:

___ a) The officer had gone along to the prisoner's home
___ b) If the prisoner had been wearing handcuffs
_X_ c) If the jail officer had told the prisoner and his family before the funeral that no special requests would be granted

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The escorting officer should try to remain as inconspicuous as possible while watching his prisoner. The officer should try to sit towards the back of the room where he can keep the prisoner in sight *at all times*. The best policy is to tell the prisoner where you will be and to warn him not to move out of your sight. A prisoner should know that if he becomes careless and wanders out of your sight, his family might be caused some embarrassment when you are forced to search for him. Let the prisoner know that if he does not consult you, and disappears from your sight, you can make only *one* assumption: *that he must be escaping*.

An escorting officer should follow this rule at all times:

|| The officer should never leave the prisoner in anyone else's care. ||

The officer's duty is the safekeeping of the prisoner. He has *no* other concerns in these situations.

Obviously, when a prisoner is allowed to mingle with other people in a public place, it is almost impossible for a jail officer to prevent passing of contraband. What do you think is the best policy to follow in controlling this problem?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

The best policy is to *search* the prisoner before he returns to his cell in the jail. As you have learned, search is the best technique for controlling the problem of contraband in *all* situations.

In all special visiting situations, the escorting officer should present a calm, authoritative appearance. Since many of these occasions become highly emotional, the officer should be prepared to act quickly and decisively.

> During one funeral, the prisoner's mother began to attack the prisoner shouting, "It's because of you that your father died. If you had been good like your brother, he'd be alive today."
>
> Before the ceremony began, the officer had observed the location of all the exits in the funeral parlor. When this emotional scene began, he quickly stepped over to the prisoner, took him firmly by the arm and led him to the nearest exit.

Do you think the officer acted calmly and decisively in this case?

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

The officer's actions showed that he was capable of calm, intelligent action at a tense moment. His knowledge of the exits showed that he had prepared himself well for quick action.

When supervising a special visit by a prisoner to a funeral, the escorting officer should: (choose the correct answers)

___ a) Make himself conspicuous by wearing a uniform and standing in front of the room facing the prisoner
___ b) Search the prisoner during the visit
___ c) Search the prisoner before returning him to his cell in the jail
___ d) Allow the family to supervise the prisoner
___ e) Keep a careful but inconspicuous watch on the prisoner during the visit
___ f) Assume that if a prisoner is not present in the room and has not told the officer where he has gone, that he has escaped and immediate action should be taken
___ g) Tell the prisoner that, if he behaves himself, that he might be allowed a private visit with his family
___ h) Inform both the prisoner and his family of what is expected of them during the visit so that they will not seek special considerations once the visit has begun.

Turn page to check your answer . . .

Answer:

The correct answers are:

c) Search the prisoner before returning him to his cell in the jail

e) Keep a careful but inconspicuous watch on the prisoner during the visit

f) Assume that if a prisoner is not present in the room and has not told the officer where he has gone, that he has escaped and immediate action should be taken

h) Inform both the prisoner and his family of what is expected of them during the visit so that they will not seek special considerations once the visit has begun

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TO THE STUDENT

On the next few pages you will find a summary of the chapter. It might be a good idea for you to tear out these pages and keep them in a convenient place so that you can refer to them whenever you wish.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, you have seen that the objectives of supervision are:

- getting people to do what is required of them
- developing an orderly, controlled environment

Poor supervision may well result in:

- disciplinary problems
- conflict between staff and prisoners
- poor prisoner morale
- escapes

You have seen that other general supervisory principles can easily be applied to the jail situation. These principles include:

- establishing the goals of the job and explaining them to the workers
- giving clear and understandable orders
- teaching prisoners how to do the job
- making frequent checks and correcting anyone who is doing the job incorrectly
- evaluating the performance of each prisoner assigned to the work

In order for a jail officer to maintain his effectiveness and image of authority, general supervisory rules can be adapted to fit the needs of the jail. For instance:

- avoid familiarity with prisoners
- do not gossip with prisoners
- do not give advice to prisoners
- do not show favoritism
- never make a promise to a prisoner which you cannot keep

The custodial nature of the jail demands that a rigid form of personal supervision be applied to everyday occurrences. Only jail staff is qualified to supervise the activities of prisoners. Allowing prisoners to supervise other prisoners in any way indicates:

- loss of control of the jail by jail personnel
- violation on the part of the jail staff of the legal rights of the other prisoners

Supervisory duties must be performed on a person-to-person basis. Relying on mechanical devices for supervision can lead to a dangerous situation in the jail.

In order to properly supervise on a person-to-person basis, the jail officer must be flexible and imaginative. He must personally conduct a number of surveillance activities in the housing units and must see that a high standard of cleanliness is maintained. These standards must be be agreed on by jail officers and carefully explained to the prisoners. Using commercial television as an incentive for good behavior is a good supervisory policy in the jail. However, officers must make sure that they can maintain control of the TV by keeping it out of the housing area.

Tear along this line

In order to supervise dining situations, the jail officers must always work towards:

- maintenance of order in the serving line and during the actual meal
- fair distribution of food by servers to all prisoners
- control of utensils to avoid smuggling and eventual use as a weapon

Administration and supervision of sick call in the jail is one of the critical aspects of jail operation. Sick call is concerned with these objectives:

- administration of proper attention to all prisoners with medical complaints
- control of all administration and taking of medicine
- control of prisoner behavior during the actual sick call procedure

Record-keeping is crucial to the success of the medical program in any jail. If records are not kept, jail personnel may become liable to untrue accusations by prisoners who claim they were not given sufficient medical care. Basic rules for medical record-keeping are:

- No jail officer should accept verbal orders from a doctor unless the doctor promises to send signed, written orders to the jail.
- The time and date of each visit by a doctor should be recorded along with the time and date of issue.
- Administration of medicine to prisoners should be recorded by time, date, and name of officer giving dosage.
- If a doctor has been called concerning a certain prisoner, a record should be made of the officer making the call, the time and date of the call, and the reason for calling.

Supervision of juveniles requires that:

- officers comply with state laws regarding age of juveniles
- juveniles be kept apart from adult prisoners
- officers be aware of and comply with need for constant surveillance of juveniles
- officers maintain good security procedures

Supervision of women requires that:

- women be housed separately from other prisoners
- male jail officers should not be responsible for any supervisory activities involving female prisoners
- no male prisoners be allowed into the women's section under any circumstances
- frequent inspections be made to determine that nothing enters or leaves the female cell area without a thorough cell inspection

Supervision of prisoners allowed to go outside of the jail on special visiting situations requires that:

- the prisoner not be allowed to leave the room where the event is being held without the escorting officer
- the officer will *not* consider special requests made by the family of the prisoner
- the officer must never leave the prisoner in anyone else's care

Tear along this line

The success of visiting situations in the jail is entirely dependent on the ability of jail officers to listen for, look for and sense any suspicious behavior. When supervising a professional visit, a jail officer must be concerned with:

- making sure that the visit is completely confidential
- making sure that prisoners are made available to attorneys whenever a reasonable request is made

These rules should be followed when supervising religious services:

- make sure services begin on time and that prisoners return to their cells immediately after the service
- do not allow visitors and prisoners to sit together or mix in any way

When supervising recreation, it is the duty of the supervisor to:

- keep order
- make sure that period is run according to schedule
- make sure all equipment is returned
- check to see that all equipment is returned in good order

Special supervisory situations include supervision of:

- Trusties
- Females
- Juveniles
- Prisoners being escorted on special visits such as funerals.

The jail officer's information is extremely important when choosing trusties. Also, although certain job assignments given to trusties require minimal supervision by jail officers, any job involving the safety or well-being of other prisoners requires strict supervision of trusties. These jobs include:

- typing of cell assignments
- serving food
- processing prisoner records
- acting as medical orderly

When trusties are not housed separately from other prisoners, officers should conduct frequent searches.

Tear along this line

* U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973 O - 520-126